

School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program

Brief Program Description

The School Violence Prevention Demonstration program teaches middle and upper elementary school students civic knowledge and skills that affect those attitudes that serve as early warning signs of violence. The program has important implications for the way schools make use of alternate teaching strategies as well as education for democracy content, which may prevent violence while helping students develop into informed, effective, and responsible citizens.

Phase I, the first pilot year of the program, was conducted in seven school districts in the US: Los Angeles Unified, Denver Public Schools, Jefferson County (Colorado) Public Schools, Wake County (North Carolina) Public Schools, Philadelphia Public Schools, Community School Districts 30 (Queens, New York) and 23 (Brooklyn, New York) Public Schools. The School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program includes three sets of materials. We the People...the Citizen and the Constitution is a program that teaches essential concepts and fundamental values of the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Critical-thinking exercises, problem-solving activities, and cooperative-learning techniques help develop the participatory skills necessary for students to become active responsible citizens. Foundations of Democracy: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility, and Justice is a multidisciplinary curriculum that focuses on four concepts fundamental to an understanding of politics and government. We the People...Project Citizen promotes competent and responsible participation in state and local government. Youth are actively engaged in learning how to monitor and influence public policy.

There were statistically significant gains in knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights in all seven sites, and significant positive shifts in attitudes toward police and authority figures in six districts. There were significant gains between the experimental and control groups in students' sense of civic responsibility in Queens and Denver. There were statistically significant gains in tolerance for the ideas of others and including all people in the political and social process in Queens and Denver. Queens also had a positive shift in relation to authority and the law. Qualitative data suggested that teachers appreciated receiving high quality social studies textbooks; receiving quality teacher training in an important area of their responsibility; meeting with teachers from other schools and districts; and learning new teaching strategies.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

Program Developer

Louis Rosen

Center for Civic Education

5146 Douglas Fir Road

Calabasas , CA 91302

Phone: (818) 591-9321

Fax: (818) 591-9330

Email: rosen@civiced.org